

The Old Ratton Residents' Association
www.orra.online

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AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2017

Dear Old Ratton Residents

I have been 'in harness' since May and the role is certainly keeping me busy in my retirement and the jury is out on whether that is a good or bad thing...depending on who you ask! Nevertheless, I have been heartened by the good wishes and thanks expressed by many of you, so many thanks from me and indeed from the whole ORRA Committee. We hope you have all enjoyed the summer months, which on balance seemed to deliver a reasonable dose of good weather, at least from time to time. With the recent changes in line up, I think there has been a lapse in the previously regular sequence of newsletters, so here I am undertaking to get back on track.

Covenants

As I mentioned at the AGM, there are two restrictive covenants that residents are struggling to remember, despite the barrage of reminders that have been circulated year in year out. I make no apology for putting this topic at the top of the list as it remains a significant issue. For information, I also attach a list of the covenants we seek to enforce.

Planning applications – very new residents may be unaware but the vast majority on the Old Ratton Estate will know that ORRA must be consulted once plans for extensions and external alterations have been drawn up but before an application is submitted for planning permission to Eastbourne Borough Council. It was made clear by residents who attended the AGM that they continue to value our attempts to manage and protect the unique environment here. This process allows us to monitor and sometimes influence the inevitable changes that residents wish to make to their homes. Help us to fulfil our purpose in this respect – get in touch early please.

Tree surgery – please also contact ORRA before carrying out tree maintenance. This applies to any work on any tree. The majority of routine maintenance will be swiftly approved but work on some more significant trees will need due consideration, assessing adverse impact on our environment and potentially alternative options.

Cycle path

We have only just become aware of a plan proposed by East Sussex Highways to replace the grass verges on the western edge of Willingdon Road between Wish Hill and Park Avenue with a shared pedestrian / cycle path. This plan includes an unsightly 1.4m metal railing between the 3m wide path and the road, which would destroy the existing attractive approach to the town. We have posted details on the ORRA website and full information can be found at <https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/economy-transport-environment/hpemacphase1/> including an online survey to record your feedback. Please speak out and have your say. The consultation closes on 10th November.

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Security

We suffered a number of break-ins and attempted theft in recent months. I believe the police have had some success in apprehending the culprits but we must all bear in mind the sad truth that we must make every effort to protect our property. We also keep an eye on the weekly Sussex Police bulletins, which are currently warning of various scam attempts in the Eastbourne area – both unsolicited fraudulent telephone calls and doorstep distraction scenarios. Please be vigilant and if ever in doubt, assume it may well be a fraud attempt and call 101. Our ORRA Webmaster, Phil Tong, posts these warnings and many other useful articles on the ORRA Facebook page (a closed group), which you can request to join by clicking on the Facebook logo on the ORRA website Home page and then the 'Join' link. There is also currently a direct link from the Latest News page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/oldrattonresidents/>

Road safety

At the last AGM in May, the strength of feeling amongst residents about speeding traffic on the Estate was clear. We have seen an increase in traffic, much of which is believed to originate from beyond our boundaries. I agreed to set up a working party to analyse the problem and research potential solutions. We are currently short of volunteers and would much appreciate anyone prepared to commit some time to this project – please let me know. This will take some time to pull together but you may see people surveying traffic volumes and possibly additional signage to assess impact on driving behaviour. May I also ask residents and visitors to park on driveways whenever possible so that pedestrians are more easily visible and possibly slightly safer from speeding traffic. Of course, goodwill and consideration for others should be at the heart of the solution, but it seems more likely to be measures designed to make it more inconvenient to behave badly.

Social event

I am very keen to organise a social event to which all ORRA members will be invited. The plan is to close Manor Way and use that space for an afternoon tea or similar event. The summer somewhat flew past this year and potentially suitable dates got later and later, until the likelihood of poor weather became almost inevitable. I have also learnt that it is time consuming to arrange such things and on balance, we will be better served taking a 'long run up' for planning in the early months of next year and working towards a well publicised event around July time. This is our intention but not yet cast in stone.

Maintenance Fees

We each share the cost of maintaining this beautiful environment. Our Treasurer, Lisa Olliff, has collected around 90% of fees due so far – thank you to those who have settled up. Please can I ask the remainder to react promptly to the reminder you will have recently received. Everyone benefits from the services required to keep Old Ratton running smoothly and it is only fair that we all contribute. Of course, not everything does always run smoothly and some of our infrastructure is failing. To start addressing some of these problems, we will be aiming to produce a schedule of work needed, prioritised and costed. Together we will need to agree how much we are prepared to pay to tackle these problems and also to fund meaningful improvements to our environment.

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Courtesy

I'm sorry to end on this note, but there has been significant noise and disruption this year due to numerous building projects around the Estate. It is fully understood that these works will take place and from time to time we will have periods when a lot is happening simultaneously. However, there have been instances when noise has been consistently intrusive and has caused a degree of upset and concern amongst neighbours. Please remember to be considerate to all those adversely affected by your building work and impress this upon your contractors too. Please avoid early starts (before 8am), late finishes (after 6pm), Saturday afternoons wherever possible and all day Sunday. When this may not be possible, let people know what to expect and why.

Thanks for reading my first update and remember to use the 'Suggestion Box' on www.orra.online to let us know what you're thinking.

Mark Thornton, Chairman, ORRA

The Covenants

We are entitled to use the estate roads with or without horses, carts, carriages or mechanically propelled vehicles provided they have pneumatic tyres if weighing more than 30 hundredweight.

As members of ORRA we must:

- 1) Maintain boundary hedges between 4ft and 6ft high,
- 2) Keep gardens tidy,
- 3) Maintain and keep tidy verges between the boundary of your property and the road,
- 4) Obtain approval for design and materials for any buildings or alterations or extensions,
- 5) Pay a fee of one guinea for building approvals,
- 6) Pay contributions towards the upkeep of the roads and drains.

As members we must not (without written consent in some cases):

- 1) Build within 5 feet of any boundary,
- 2) Build in front of the marked building line,
- 3) Keep caravans,
- 4) Keep poultry or livestock,
- 5) Cut down or lop any trees on our land,
- 6) Carry out any trade or business,
- 7) Use land or buildings for advertising,
- 8) Damage the roads, verges or trees.